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ABSTRACT

Fort Worth's Language Center programs offer intensive instruction in English and in social studies to limited-English-speaking students from grades 6-12 in five middle schools and four high schools. The program's objective is to bring the students' English language proficiency to a level enabling them to compete academically in a less sheltered school curriculum. Evaluation of student standardized test results and other measures of student achievement for 1984-85 showed that students made progress in learning English in this English as a second language (ESL) program. In addition, principals were very supportive of the program, and teachers used the program materials and methodologies and articulated program objectives and guidelines. Recommendations for change include: (1) expansion of the middle school program to include science, (2) examination of the ninth grade reading program, and (3) expansion of the high school program to include mathematics. (MSE)

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FORT WORTH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
FORT WORTH, TEXAS

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LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM EVALUATION 1984-1985

PE85-467-14

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

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FORT WORTH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM EVALUATION
1984-1985

PE85-467-14

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Rita Sierra, Evaluator

Department of Planning, Research and Evaluation
Dr. Dan Powell, Director

June 1985

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ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

LANGUAGE CENTER
1984-1985

Owner's Code:	370	Cost Per Student:	$541
Cost of Program:	$308,370	Funding Source:	State Bilingual and Local
Number of Students:	570		
Number of Staff:	22	Number of Schools:	9 (see back)

DESCRIPTION: Language Center programs are offered in five middle schools and four high schools. Transportation is provided for students from non-Center schools. Students receive three hours of English and one hour of social studies instruction per day. Exiting students are placed in the Transition English as a Second Language program.

POPULATION SERVED: Grades 6-12 Limited English Proficient students, who have been in the United States for 2 years or less, are eligible for this program.

OBJECTIVES: The objective of the program is to produce proficiency in English language skills to the point that students can compete academically in a less sheltered school curriculum.

RESEARCH FINDINGS: The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) mean grade equivalent gains for Grades 6-8 were: vocabulary, .9; reading, 1.2; language, 1.2 and math, 1.1. The Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) mean grade equivalent gains for Grades 9-11 were: reading, .5; language, 1.3 and math, .5. Forty-three percent of all students gained 1 or more levels on the Language Assessment Scales (LAS). The mean LAS gain for Grades 6-8 was .5 levels. The mean gain for Grades 9-12 was .6 levels. Eighty-four percent of Grades 6-8 students and 83% of Grades 9-12 students enrolled in 1983-84 progressed to higher instructional levels in 1984-85. Surveyed principals report that Language Centers have increased the rate of student learning in English and other subjects (exception: Grades 6-8 science). Comments ranged from "It has been a godsend!" to "The program has expanded and improved the services these students receive." Observed teachers used program materials and methodologies. They articulated program objectives and guidelines.

CONCLUSIONS: Students showed progress in English. Principals were very supportive of the program. Teachers used the program guidelines to teach to the objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS: 1) Consider expanding the middle school program to include science. 2) Examine the ninth grade reading program. 3) Consider expanding the high school program to include math. 4) Continue high quality program implementation.

Program Manager: Alice Contreras
Evaluator: Rita Sierra
Research and Evaluation
Date: June 1985

152	Rosemont
153	E. M. Daggett
157	J. P. Elder
158	Riverside
165	W. A. Meacham
261	R. L. Paschal
262	North Side
264	Carter-Riverside
265	Diamond Hill-Jarvis

FORT WORTH INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
LANGUAGE CENTER
PROGRAM EVALUATION
1984-1985

WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM?

The objective of the program is to produce proficiency in survival English language skills, both oral and written, to the point that the student can compete academically in a less sheltered school curriculum.

HOW IS THE PROGRAM ORGANIZED?

There are Language Centers in five middle schools and four high schools. Ten middle and twelve high school teachers staff the centers. All of the middle schools and three of the high schools have aides working in the centers. Table 1 shows the teacher and aide breakdown by schools. (All tables are located in Appendix A.)

Students enrolled in a full center program attend center classes for four hours a day. The other two hours are spent in regular program electives. Students in a partial center program attend center classes from one to three hours a day, depending upon their needs.

Class sizes depend on the size of the Center and the students' individual needs. Centers with eight students in one class and 30 in another are not uncommon.

WHAT STUDENTS ARE BEING SERVED?

In order to qualify for the Language Center program,

students must: (a) have been in the United States for two years or less and (b) be Limited English Proficient (LEP) with a Language Assessment Scales (LAS) score of level 1 or 2.

Approximately 290 middle and 280 high school students from 14 different language groups were enrolled in 1984-85. Four hundred sixty-one of these students received full program services.

HOW ARE STUDENTS PLACED IN THE PROGRAM?

Upon enrollment, students or their parents are required to complete a Home Language Survey card. If one of the responses is a language other than English, the student is usually referred to one of the two Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) Student Placement Centers.

The Placement Center personnel assist the students and their parents in the completion of the necessary enrollment papers. They also administer the language proficiency tests required by the state. A program recommendation is made based upon the results of the tests.

If the student's recommended placement is the Language Center program, he/she is assigned to the home school whenever possible. High school students whose home school does not have a center are assigned to Paschal. Middle school students are assigned to either the Rosemont or Daggett Center.

According to a placement survey sent out in October 1984,

most schools with Language Center programs receive the following information from the Placement Center: a) Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) scores, b) LAS scores, c) Home Language Cards, d) enrollment papers and e) program recommendations. High schools also reported receiving math assessments. Middle schools reported receiving health records. All schools agreed that the information they received was usually accurate.

The most frequently (78%) reported use of the information was to place students in appropriate English and/or math classes. Some schools also reported using this information to a) place students in appropriate English as a Second Language (ESL) levels (22%) and b) to plan individualized instruction (11%). While the schools considered most of the Placement Center information to be essential, they did mention the following as being most helpful when determining placement: (a) LAS scores, 56%; (b) program recommendations, 33%; (c) transcripts, 11% and (d) reading level, 11%.

Once students are placed in the Language Center program the school's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) must confirm that the placement is appropriate. The students' parents must also approve the placement.

WHAT TYPES OF SPECIAL NEEDS DO THESE STUDENTS HAVE?

Language Center students all have one need in common: the need to learn basic English skills, both oral and written. Appendix B contains a copy of the specific skills and objectives

students are expected to master in years one and two. Other student needs are dependent upon: (a) length of time in the United States, (b) amount of schooling (if any) in the student's home country and (c) prior social environment in home country.

HOW DOES THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM MEET THESE NEEDS?

The Language Center's primary focus is on providing specialized English instruction for students with little or no English skills. Students are enrolled in English, reading, and Language Lab (Speech) for three periods a day. The remaining hour is spent in social studies. Paschal's center also offers math classes as part of its program.

Students are grouped, when possible, by English fluency for the English, reading and lab classes. An attempt is made to offer grade appropriate social studies. Math class assignments are made by math ability levels.

Program teachers are strongly encouraged to use ESL methods and materials. Special texts and materials are supplied by the Bilingual Office.

WHY WAS THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM FORMED?

In the 1982-83 school year, the Bilingual Office staff and a special planning committee of district personnel presented a Language Center proposal to FWISD's Administrative Council. At that time FWISD recognized the need for extensive program improvements, both managerial and instructional, primarily

because of the increasing number of LEP students.

Specific needs noted at that time were:

1. Increasing reports of non-literacy among refugee students.
2. Continuous retraining of ESL teachers.
3. Schools having only a few non-English students and no designated ESL class.
4. Continuous change of ESL counselors.
5. Inability (lack of staff) of school personnel to deal with the LEP students.
6. Continuous student mobility.
7. Lack of bilingual support in content areas.
8. Lack of a system for tracking students.
9. Consistently low standardized test scores with little evidence of progress.

WHAT CONCLUSIONS WERE DRAWN BY THE PLANNING COMMITTEE?

The committee submitted the following conclusions which were used to find solutions to program needs:

1. Three periods a day were needed to teach English to non-English speaking students.
2. Bilingual instruction was needed in major content areas.
3. District resources needed to be consolidated.
4. Program teachers needed to be specially selected.
5. Teachers needed to be supervised jointly by the principal and Bilingual Office staff.
6. Home schools needed to continue to provide a well-defined Transition English program.
7. The student-teacher ratio needed to be lower than the normal ratio.

HOW DID THE PROPOSED LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM ADDRESS THESE NEEDS?

The program design addressed these needs in the following ways:

1. Students in the Center program were to receive three periods of English, one period of social studies, one period of math and one elective period.
2. English and social studies were to be taught by center teachers.
3. Other subjects would be taught by regular program teachers.

4. Some high school students would be placed in regular or advanced classes if their skills exceeded the course-work offered by the center.
5. The student/teacher ratio would be 15 to 1.

WHAT CRITERIA MUST STUDENTS MEET TO EXIT THE PROGRAM?

At the end of one year, students are reassessed and returned to their home schools if they: (a) have an English LAS Level 3 or above on reassessment, (b) have the staff's recommendation, (c) score above chance level on the language and reading subtest of ITBS or Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), (d) score above Level 3 on holistic assessment of writing skills and (e) have their parents' approval or waiver. Students who do not meet these criteria remain in the program for a second academic year and exit at the end of that year.

As students exit, the center staff recommends proper grade-level placement. Students exited from the center are placed in Transition English classes at their home schools where they receive special services in English and reading until they reach the achievement status specified in Texas Senate Bill 477.

HOW ARE THE LANGUAGE CENTERS STAFFED AND ORGANIZED?

The basic staffing plan for the Language Centers is that of two teachers and one aide. Variations in this plan depend upon the number of students being served and the classroom space available.

Each center has one teacher who is designated as the Team Leader. The Team Leaders are scheduled for two planning periods

a day. The second planning period is to be used to coordinate the center's program.

The Programs of Classes indicate that all five middle school Team Leaders and two of the four high school Team Leaders have a second planning period. Those Team Leaders without a second planning period opted to teach a class during that time because: (a) Center classes were overloaded or (b) Correlated Language Arts (CLA) was not offered at the school and non-program LEP students were failing regular classes.

WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING AND CREDENTIALS MUST PROGRAM TEACHERS HAVE?

According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) guidelines, teachers who teach English to LEP students must either have, or be working on, their ESL certification. A number of teachers were able to obtain "protected status" under the "grandfather clause" of 1981-82. These teachers are considered to be qualified to teach ESL as long as they remain in FWISD. Other teachers are currently working on, or have completed, the 12 college hours necessary for certification. The Bilingual Office offers stipends to those teachers currently working on their ESL certification.

FWISD's language center teachers must also have appropriate certification in two fields and demonstrate an understanding of language acquisition, ESL methodology and cultural/linguistic differences. It is to their advantage to be bilingual.

WHAT ROLE(S) DO THE INSTRUCTIONAL AIDES PERFORM IN THE LANGUAGE CENTERS?

The primary responsibility of the instructional aides is to manage the Language Laboratories. Since these labs are designed to reinforce concepts taught by the center teachers, the lessons are either planned by or coordinated with the teachers. The aides also assist the teachers during social studies, either by tutoring individual students or working with small groups of students on specific concepts. Most of the aides are bilingual and provide assistance to students in two languages.

WHAT TYPES OF SUPPORT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

The Bilingual Office has one Secondary ESL Instructional Specialist as well as a Program Coordinator available to work with the Language Center staffs. The instructional specialist assists teachers in program implementation through classroom observation, demonstration lessons, and inservices. She also assists the school counselors and Team Leaders with the students' schedules of classes. The program coordinator monitors district-wide implementation and assists individual schools as needed.

The Bilingual Office also offers inservices through the Staff Development Office. Participating teachers and aides receive compensatory time or a stipend.

WHAT TYPES OF INSERVICES WERE HELD DURING THE 1984-85 SCHOOL YEAR TO ASSIST AND TRAIN CENTER STAFFS?

The Catalogue of Options for 1984-85 listed two inservices

which would have been of interest to the Language Center staffs. One was on the theories and principles of second language learning; the other was on state-adopted ESOL textbooks and related materials.

Six additional workshops, especially for Language Center personnel, were held between August 14-October 27, 1984. These covered writing and reading skills and methodologies. The inservice titles and dates are listed in Table 2.

HOW OFTEN DID TEACHERS AND AIDES ATTEND THE INSERVICES?

Most teachers attended more than one inservice during the 1984-85 school year. Middle school teachers attended an average of 4.3 inservices, while high school teachers attended an average of 3.4. Four teachers were unable to attend any district inservices since they were hired after January 1985, and are not included in these averages.

Aides attended an average of 2.3 inservices during the past year. Middle school aides attended an average of 2.8 inservices and high school aides, an average of two.

It appeared that some centers scheduled at least one person to attend each inservice. The centers' average number of inservices attended was six. The smaller centers seemed to have a more difficult time covering the inservices than those centers with three or more staff members.

HOW DID TEACHERS AND AIDES RESPOND TO THE INSERVICES?

Teacher and aide responses to the inservices were usually positive. The responses were especially positive when the inservice was tailored to specific Language Center needs and concerns. These inservices were also better attended than more general ESL inservices. Table 2 shows the number of teachers and aides attending each inservice and the percentage of those responding positively.

WHAT TYPE OF INSERVICE TRAINING WAS PROVIDED FOR TEACHERS WHO ENTERED THE PROGRAM IN JANUARY?

Two of these teachers received two days of individual training from the ESL instructional specialist. One of these teachers also observed the specialist do demonstration teaching.

A third teacher received a half day of training from the program coordinator prior to being assigned to the school. She received some assistance from the instructional specialist after her classes began. The fourth teacher had worked with center students prior to his full-time center assignment and did not receive any further training.

HOW DID THE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS RESPOND TO THE PROGRAM?

A telephone survey was conducted in June 1985, to solicit the principals' perceptions of the Language Centers' effectiveness. The four surveyed principals were asked for their impressions of how the centers had affected services to LEP

students, if the students were showing satisfactory progress in English and other subjects and what program changes, if any, they would recommend.

The principals stated that the Language Centers had affected the services to LEP students by: (a) increasing the English proficiency of students entering Transition ESL classes or regular programs, (b) providing native language instruction when necessary, (c) improving the counseling services and (d) providing special, improved materials. The principals agreed that the center students showed satisfactory progress in English. Specific examples of this progress included: (a) the students' quick acquisition of oral language, (b) the students' improved attendance, (c) the students' acquisition of the terminology for functioning in the American culture and their subsequent acceptance by other students, (d) the improved reading scores and (e) the students' increased ability to function successfully in regular classes.

All four principals agreed that the students progressed satisfactorily in math. The two high school principals stated that the students also showed satisfactory progress in other subjects. The two middle school principals indicated that science was often a problem for the students. One principal suggested not sending center students to science until they had been in the program for two months or having a bilingual science teacher. The other principal plans to add science to his center program. The two high school principals did not suggest any

specific changes although one principal suggested continued sensitivity to the pupil-teacher ratio and careful planning to accommodate projected enrollments.

Other comments included:

1. The Bilingual Office personnel have been very helpful and serve as good resources when questions arise.
2. The program organization is correct and the staff is committed to helping and teaching the students.
3. The self-contained classes have been a tremendous boost to the students.
4. The program is going very well, it should be continued.
5. The program has been a godsend!

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Twenty-three classroom observations were conducted throughout the 1984-85 school year. This section reports on the results of those observations.

HOW WERE CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS CONDUCTED?

Form letters were sent to building principals a week prior to the evaluator's visit. These letters specified the program which would be observed but not the day or time of the evaluator's visit.

Upon arrival at the school, the evaluator visited the selected classroom(s), usually for the entire class period. Prior to leaving the classroom, the observation instrument was discussed with the teacher whenever possible. Teachers were invited to make any additions, corrections or comments. These were noted on the observation instrument.

WHAT TYPES OF INFORMATION WERE COLLECTED FROM THE CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS?

Information on class make-up, materials and methodologies was collected during the observation. Information on program strengths and weaknesses was volunteered by teachers either before or after the observation. The answers to the following questions are based upon the data collected during the classroom visitations. Thirteen middle and ten high school classes were observed.

WHAT LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN BY THE PROGRAM TEACHERS?

Twelve of the 13 middle school teachers speak both Spanish and English. One teacher also speaks French and Vietnamese. Another speaks Chinese and English.

Eight of the ten high school teachers speak Spanish and English. Two of these eight also speak Vietnamese and one of the two speaks French as well. Two teachers speak only English.

WHAT LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN BY THE STUDENTS?

At least one student in every classroom speaks Spanish. Vietnamese is the next most frequently spoken language with eight middle and eight high school classes having at least one Vietnamese speaking student. Three middle and four high school classes have Cambodian speaking students. Other student languages include Laotian, Farsi, and Chinese.

HOW WELL DO THE TEACHER/STUDENT LANGUAGES MATCH?

Spanish speaking students are the most likely to be taught by teachers who speak their language since there is at least one Spanish speaking teacher at every center. The three Vietnamese speaking teachers are at centers where students speak Vietnamese. There are three centers where there are Vietnamese speaking students and no teachers who speak Vietnamese.

The Chinese speaking teacher is at the one center with Chinese speaking students. There is one aide who speaks Cambodian at a center with Cambodian students. Students who

speak other languages are unlikely to receive assistance in their native language.

WHAT SUBJECTS WERE OBSERVED?

English was the most frequently observed subject either in combination with reading or alone. Social studies was observed in three high school classes but not in middle school.

WHAT ENGLISH TOPICS WERE TAUGHT IN THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM?

The English topics taught in this program fell into one of four categories: grammar, literature, composition and vocabulary. Middle school teachers averaged about two topics per class period. High school teachers averaged one topic per class period.

Vocabulary was taught frequently in both middle (83%) and high (67%) school classes. Grammar was not taught quite as often (58% in middle school and 33% in high school) but did receive more time than either literature or composition. Composition was not taught in any of the observed high school classes.

WHAT MATERIALS WERE USED TO TEACH THE LANGUAGE CENTER CLASSES?

Textbooks were used most frequently in both middle and high school classes. Other materials included chalkboards, ditto sheets and visuals. Middle school teachers used an average of three different materials in one class period. High school teachers used an average of two different materials per class

period. The percentages of teachers using the various materials are presented in Table 3.

The textbooks used in middle schools were English Alfa and Crossroads (a basal reader). High school classes used: World History and You, New Horizons in English, Spelling by Doing, English for a Changing World, Introduction to American History, English Spoken Here and Everyday English. All of these are Language Center texts. Many of the students also carried native language/English pocket dictionaries which were used by teachers and students whenever necessary.

WHAT LANGUAGE SKILLS WERE OBSERVED?

The student language skills which were observed were: (a) listening to, speaking, reading and writing in English and (b) listening to and speaking their native language.

There were two middle school classes in which students were listening to and speaking English but did no reading or writing in English. In one of these classes students listened to and spoke their native language as well.

In four of the 13 middle school classes students exhibited three of the four English language skills. None of the students in these classes were observed speaking their native language.

In the other seven middle school classes students exhibited all four English language skills. In six of these classes, they were observed listening to and speaking their native language.

In nine of the ten high school classes, students exhibited

all four English language skills. In seven of these classes, students listened to and spoke their native language. In the remaining class, students listened to, spoke and read English but did not use their native language.

WHAT LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS WERE OBSERVED?

For the purposes of these observations, language functions were defined as the ways in which oral language was used by the teachers and students. Four categories were used to classify these functions: (a) explaining and informing, (b) self expression (original responses, ideas or opinions), (c) asking or answering questions and (d) social interaction.

Teachers in all classrooms used English to explain lessons and concepts and inform students of class and homework assignments. When necessary, teachers briefly used the student's native language to give instructions, clarify concepts and check for understanding. This native language use occurred in four (31%) of the middle school classes and six (60%) of the high school classes.

Students in 11 (85%) middle and eight (80%) high school classes used English to explain either their answers or the lesson's concept. Students in nine (69%) middle and four (40%) high school classes used English to express an original thought or opinion.

Students in four (31%) middle and seven (70%) high school classes used their native language to ask questions or comment on

the lesson. Students in four (31%) middle and five (50%) high school classes used their native language to interact socially with their peers.

WHAT INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES WERE OBSERVED?

Middle school teachers were likely to use modeling (62%), independent work (54%), oral drills (46%) and visual clues (46%) as instructional strategies. Other strategies used by these teachers include informal conversation (38%), and student oral reading (31%).

Favored teaching strategies among high school teachers included: student oral reading (70%), independent work (60%), and informal conversation (60%). These teachers also used modeling (40%) and teacher oral reading (40%) as instructional strategies.

Oral drills, visual clues, modeling and informal conversation are ESL strategies. The definitions of these strategies are in Appendix B. A complete list of the observed strategies and percent of teachers using them is shown in Table 4.

WHAT TYPES OF INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES APPEARED TO BE PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE?

While most students appeared to understand the concepts presented and were able to successfully complete the class assignments, some activities seemed to be particularly effective

and worth noting. Some were used in both middle and high schools; others were observed in one or the other.

The presentation of visual information appeared to be especially useful to center students at both levels. This included: (a) pointing to the student or item which should be included in the answer, (b) allowing students to manipulate all the items used in the lesson, (c) acting out the correct response and (d) having on-hand pictures related to the lesson's content.

The use of audio-visual materials was also common to middle and high school classes. Language masters and tape recorders were used by teachers to tailor instruction to individual needs.

Two teaching techniques which seemed helpful to middle school students were providing expanded, corrected feedback and practicing language patterns in controlled conversations.

In one middle school class, students worked in small groups at four learning centers. The students were given specific tasks to perform in order to accomplish each center's stated objective. Extension activities were built into each center. Students in this class seemed very engrossed in their tasks. The teacher provided individual and group instruction. This classroom exhibited three effective instructional practices cited by Cazden (1). The exhibited practices were: (a) providing opportunities for students to work together on academic tasks, (b) providing opportunities for individualized instruction and (c) actively engaging students in instructional tasks using the target language (English).

Two high school teachers had their students write the correct answers on the chalkboard in addition to reading the answers aloud. Students then had the opportunity to hear and see the correct responses. Teachers were able to correct and discuss written errors which were not evident upon hearing the responses.

WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES WERE OBSERVED?

Instructional and management activities were recorded for these observations. Both middle and high school teachers favored whole class teacher directed instruction. There were some classes in which students worked independently while the teacher monitored the class and others where the teacher worked with a small group of students while the rest of the class worked independently.

Classroom discipline was the most common management activity observed in middle schools. The most common high school management activity was handing in or passing out papers. The activities and percentages of teachers involved are shown in Table 5.

The amount of time spent on instructional activities was nearly equivalent for the two groups. Middle school classes spent about 95% of the class period on instructional activities while high school classes spent 92% of their time on instructional activities.

PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS

The problems and concerns of people involved with the Language Centers depend largely upon the student population which is being served. This chapter discusses: (a) staff turnover, (b) transcript verification, (c) students without prior schooling, (d) student withdrawals, (e) teachers' concerns and (f) busing.

WHAT PERCENTAGE OF THE LANGUAGE CENTER STAFF IS NEW EACH YEAR?

Prior to the beginning of the center program, the turnover rate of ESL teachers was fairly high. The percentage of new staff during the years 1981-82 to 1982-83 were: (a) 1980-81 - 36%, (b) 1981-82 - 43% and (c) 1982-83 - 41%.

The Language Center program began in the 1983-84 school year. Of the 19 teachers who were hired for the program, 14 (74%) had not been ESL teachers the year before. Of the 22 1984-85 program teachers, four (18%) were new to the program. Three of these teachers were added mid-year due to the unexpected number of students enrolled at Paschal.

WHAT TYPES OF DIFFICULTIES ARE ENCOUNTERED WITH CENTER STUDENTS TRANSCRIPTS?

Unlike most students new to FWISD, Language Center students do not usually have verification of prior schooling upon enrollment. Students who do not bring their transcripts with them, will often not receive them until a year later.

The implications of this are of particular concern to high school age students. Without verification of prior schooling,

there is no legal way of providing missing credits to place students in specific grade levels. Students are usually placed in ninth grade until their transcripts arrive.

The lack of transcripts also makes it difficult for students who enter midsemester. Without proof that the student has been attending school, FWISD cannot give the student full credit for the semester during which he/she enrolls. This has led to having students audit courses until they can begin earning credits the following semester.

Center students with transcripts are not totally exempt from problems. Credit is usually given for all coursework except English. In order to receive credit for an English course, the student must score above Level 1 on the LAS. The rationale is that if the student cannot score above a non-speaking level, the English course was not equivalent to FWISD's beginning ESL course.

WHAT SPECIAL ADJUSTMENTS MUST BE MADE FOR STUDENTS WITHOUT PRIOR SCHOOLING?

A study done in New York City schools by Torres and Villegas (2) indicates that native language achievement is the most important predictor of English-language achievement. High school students with stronger native language skills performed better on English proficiency tests than those with weaker skills. One of the implications drawn by Torres and Villegas was that realistic objectives for students with poor native language skills must be

different from those for students with excellent language skills.

FWISD center students without prior schooling begin their studies with the rest of the beginning level students. All students at this level receive instruction in survival English skills. The students without prior schooling are usually maintained as beginners for a longer period of time because they have so little to build upon.

In addition to learning to speak, read and write in English, these students are taught basic school skills such as responding appropriately to school bells and knowing what to do with school supplies. They also learn how to cope socially in school situations. It appears to be unrealistic to expect students without prior schooling to exit the Center program in two years. It is also unlikely that high school age students will earn enough credits to graduate.

HOW MANY STUDENTS WITHDREW FROM THE PROGRAM DURING THE 1984-85 SCHOOL YEAR?

Middle school centers had a total of 21 percent of their students withdraw prior to the end of the year. High school centers had 27 percent of their students withdraw before the school year ended. The percentages of student withdrawals by grade level are shown in Table 6.

WHY DID STUDENTS WITHDRAW FROM THE CENTERS?

Middle school students were most likely to withdraw when moving out of FWISD (54%). Other reasons included transferring

to another center (29%) and exiting to a Transition ESL class (14%). Transfers to other centers were usually administrative and due to overcrowding.

Withdrawing high school students were likely to be moving (32%) or entering a Transition ESL class (21%). Other reasons included going to work (12%), transfering to another center (5%), dropping out of school (4%) and getting married (3%).

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TEACHERS' CONCERNS AND SUGGESTIONS?

Teachers were invited to express their concerns in the course of the classroom observation and through a teacher's survey sent out in April 1985. Three concerns were mentioned by two or more teachers: (a) more space and/or personnel are needed, (b) special education students need to be in special classes and (c) class schedules need to be better coordinated to avoid overcrowding and multilevel classes.

Teachers' suggestions included: (a) providing enough textbooks so that students do not have to share books with other classes, (b) having the ESL instructional specialist demonstrate new ESL techniques, (c) providing the centers with video taping equipment and computers, (d) allowing teachers to select their own materials and (e) allowing teachers to strengthen first language skills when necessary.

HOW DOES BUSING STUDENTS AFFECT THE PROGRAM?

Students who qualify for the Language Center program and

whose home school does not offer the program, are bused to one of three schools: Daggett, Rosemont or Paschal. As a result, the enrollment for these schools is higher than it would be if they served only those students in their attendance area. These centers also have the highest number of students in full center programs. This results in more center classrooms than would be necessary to serve the schools' home populations.

WHAT CHANGES ARE PROPOSED FOR NEXT YEAR?

Most of the proposed changes are logistical and due to the resettling of Southeast Asian refugees in south Fort Worth. This resettlement will probably continue at its present pace for at least another academic year. The Bilingual Office has proposed changes to prevent overcrowding at the three centers most likely to receive these students: Paschal, Rosemont and Daggett.

The suggested changes include:

1. Adding a temporary building to Paschal to provide additioal classroom space.
2. Adding four teachers to Paschal's staff.
3. Transporting Daggett's bused-in students to Riverside Middle School.
4. Transfering an aide to the Riverside Center.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

HOW ARE ARE THE ITBS AND TAP USED TO MEASURE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT?

The ITBS and TAP are used to measure student progress in vocabulary (Grades 6-8 only), reading, language and math. Grade equivalent gains were calculated for students enrolled in the program from 1983-84 to 1984-85. Mean grade equivalents for 1984-85 students were also calculated.

WHAT ACHIEVEMENT GAINS WERE MADE?

The mean grade equivalent gains for Grades 6-8 were: vocabulary, .9; reading, 1.2; language, 1.2 and math, 1.1. The mean gains for Grades 9-11 were: reading, .5; language, 1.3 and math, .5. While Grade 9 students made no gain in reading, Grades 10 and 11 students showed gains of .8. Table 7 shows the mean gains by grade level.

WHAT WERE THE ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATING STUDENTS?

None of the grade equivalent results were at or above grade level. Overall, math grade equivalents were closest to grade level and reading were farthest from grade level. The mean grade equivalents by grade are in Table 8.

HOW ARE LAS TESTS USED TO MEASURE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT?

LAS tests are administered to students in Grades 6-12 upon enrollment in FWISD. LEP students with levels of 1, 2 or 3 are retested each spring. The student's prior LAS level is compared to his/her current level to assess gain in English proficiency.

WHAT LAS LANGUAGE GAINS WERE MADE?

Forty-three percent of the 321 students with pre/post LAS levels gained one level or more. Fifty-three percent of the students showed no change in levels and 4% showed a drop in levels. Table 9 shows the changes by grade level.

The mean gain for Grades 6-12 was .5 LAS levels. The gains by grade level are shown in Table 9.

WHY MIGHT STUDENTS SHOW NO CHANGE ON THEIR LAS LEVELS?

It is possible to gain (or lose) points but not show a level change because of the LAS scoring system. LAS levels are calculated by converting the student's raw score to a 100 point scale which determines the correct level. The number of points within a level vary from 60 (Level 1) to 10 (Levels 2-4). The most limited students (Level 1) must score 61 points or more in order to show a level gain. Since most Language Center students have level 1 or 2 scores, this might account for the number of students showing no change.

HOW IS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT MEASURED WITHIN THE CENTER PROGRAM?

Student achievement is measured by the student's ability to progress from one instructional level to another. The sequential levels are beginning, intermediate, advanced, partial program and CLA (high school only).

One hundred seventy-seven middle school students were enrolled in both 1983-84 and 1984-85. Of these students, 50% entered the 1984-85 school year at a higher instructional level. Thirteen percent moved from full to partial program services and 16% continued at the same instructional level. Twenty percent exited from the program and did not receiwe services during the 1984-85 school year.

One hundred forty-seven high school students were enrolled in both 1983-84 and 1984-85. Of these students, 25% moved to a higher instructional level. Forty-one percent moved from full to partial or CLA programs and 17% continued at the same instructional level. Seventeen percent exited from the program and did not receive services during the 1984-85 school year.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

WHAT CONCLUSIONS MAY BE DRAWN REGARDING THE LANGUAGE CENTER PROGRAM?

1. Students showed progress in English. The gains made on ITBS and TAP language subtests as well as on the LAS were indicators of this progress. The number of students progressing from one instructional level to another is also indicative of this progress.

2. Principals were very supportive of the program. Indicators of this were the positive survey results and the schools' adherence to program guidelines.

3. Teachers used the program guidelines to teach to the objectives. Classroom observations and the teachers' abilities to articulate the program's objectives verified this use of the guidelines.

WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS MAY BE MADE?

1. Consider expanding the middle school program to include science. Concern for students failing science was expressed by principals, teachers and Bilingual Office staff.

2. Examine the ninth grade reading program. Although it may be reasonable to assume that most ninth grade students are first year Center students (and therefore have limited English skills) some reading achievement should be visible.

3. Consider expanding the high school program to include math. Student progress does not appear to be consistent in this area.

4. Continue high quality program implementation.

REFERENCES

1. Cazden, Courtney B. "Effective Instructional Practices in Bilingual Education." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Chicago, April 1985.

2. Torres, Judith S., and Villegas, Jose J. "Relationships Among Student Characteristics, Achievement and School Context in E.S.E.A. Title VII High School Programs." Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting, Chicago, April 1985.

3. Krashen, Stephen D. Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition. New York, New York: Pergamon Press, 1982.

APPENDIX A. TABLES

Table 1. Teachers and aides: Number of teachers and aides by participating schools.

School #	School Name	# of Teachers	# of Aides	Total Staff
152	Rosemont	2	2	4
153	Daggett	2	2	4
157	Elder	2	2	4
158	Riverside	2		2
165	Meacham	2	1	3
261	Paschal	7	2	9
262	Northside	2	1	3
264	Carter-Riverside	2	1	3
265	Diamond Hill-Jarvis	1	1	2
	TOTAL	22	12	34

Table 2. Inservice Responses: The percent of Language Center personnel (teachers and aides) responding positively to each inservice.

Date	Inservice Title	# of Teachers	# of Aides	Total	% Responding Positively
5/31/84	State-adopted ESOL Textbooks	7		7	100
8/13/84	Language Learning vs Language Acquisition	13	3	16	73
8/14/84	Language Center Writing Workshop	15	8	23	100
8/17/84	ESL Lab Make and Take Workshop	3	5	8	100
8/30/84	Writing Process Workshop	10	11	21	100
9/13/84	Make and Take Workshop	3	5	8	100
9/22/84	Language Center Reading Workshop	12	1	13	86
10/27/84	Language Center Reading	11	1	12	94

Table 3. Teaching Materials: The percentage of teachers using various materials to teach Language Center classes.

Materials	Middle (N=13)	High (N=10)	Total (N=23)
Textbooks	62	90	74
Chalkboard	54	40	48
Workbooks	31	10	22
Ditto Sheets	38	30	35
Visuals	46	10	30
Games	15		9
Audio Tapes	8	20	13
Films		10	4
Journals	8		4
Other Books		10	4

Table 4. Instructional Strategies: The percentage of classroom observations during which teachers were observed using the following strategies.

Strategy	Middle (N=13)	High (N=10)	Total (N=23)
Total Physical Response (TPR)*	15	10	13
Oral drills*	46		26
Group Work with Individual Products	15	20	17
Individual Work	54	60	57
Informal Conversation*	38	60	48
Pair Work*	8	10	9
Student Oral Reading	31	70	48
Teacher Oral Reading	23	40	30
Choral Reading*		10	4
Modeling*	62	30	48
Visual Clues*	46	10	30
Question and Answer Sessions	23	30	26
Expanded Feedback*	8		4
Role Playing*		10	4

* = ESL strategy

Table 5. Instructional and Management Activities: The percent of teachers involved in various instructional and management activities.

Activities	Middle (N=13)	High (N=10)	Total (N=23)
Instructional			
Whole class teacher directed instruction.	77	90	83
Teacher works with a small group while other students work independently.	23	10	17
Teacher works with a small group while the aide assists individual students.	15		9
All students work independently while the teacher monitors the class.	23	40	30
All students work independently while the teacher works with individual students on a rotating basis.		10	4
Management			
Checking roll.	8	10	9
Handing out/taking up papers.		30	13
Grouping/reorganizing of students.	23	10	17
Preparing audio-visual materials.		10	4
Discipline.	38	20	30

Table 6. Student Withdrawals: The percentage of students, by grade level, who withdrew prior to the end of the 1984-85 school year.

Grade Level	Total Number of Center Students	Total Number of Withdrawals	% of Students Withdrawing
6	92	16	17
7	150	28	19
8	93	25	27
9	160	48	30
10	68	16	24
11	33	9	27
12	10		
TOTAL	606	142	23

Table 7. Mean ITBS and TAP gains: Mean grade equivalent gains by grade level.

	ITBS and TAP Subtests			
Grade	Vocabulary	Reading	Language	Math
6	.5	.7	.9	.8
7	1.0	1.1	1.5	1.4
8	1.1	1.6	1.2	1.0
9	*	0.0	1.7	.6
10	*	.8	1.2	.5
11	*	.8	1.7	.1

* Test not given at this grade.

Table 8. ITBS and TAP Grade Equivalents: Mean grade equivalents by grade level.

	ITBS and TAP Subtests			
Grade	Vocabulary	Reading	Language	Math
6	4.1	4.0	4.3	5.4
7	5.0	4.9	5.2	6.7
8	5.6	6.0	5.8	7.1
9	*	5.5	6.3	7.8
10	*	5.7	6.7	8.0
11	*	6.0	6.8	8.1

* Test not given at this grade.

Table 9. LAS gains: The percent of students, by grade level, gaining, showing no change or losing LAS levels.

Grade	# of Students	% Showing Gains	Mean Gains	% Showing No Change	% Showing Losses
6	40	25	.2	65	10
7	61	46	.6	52	2
8	40	58	.8	42	0
9	76	29	.3	67	4
10	76	54	.8	45	1
11	25	52	.6	36	12
12	3	33	.3	33	33

APPENDIX B. ESL OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Year 1 Objectives - ESL/Reading/Writing

I. LISTENING - The student shall be provided opportunities to

A. distinguish between various English speech sounds including:

1. simple consonant and vowel sounds;
2. minimal pairs; and
3. language interference difficulties.

B. listen attentively to spoken English in words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and complete sentences:

1. using structured exercises;
2. hearing simple stories and dialogue;
3. following directions;
4. identifying speaker's main idea; and
5. selecting information from an oral presentation.

C. analyze speaker's semantic intention in statements, questions, exclamations, and commands;

D. learn vocabulary for subject areas including:

1. content-area vocabulary in context; and
2. cognates and other terms that express concepts already learned through the first language;

E. perceive nonverbal components of messages including:

1. nonverbal language in general;
2. nonverbal language specific to English-speaking culture; and
3. socially acceptable or unacceptable nonverbal language.

II. SPEAKING - The student shall be provided opportunities to

A. successfully give oral directions including:

1. simple one-activity directions;
2. series of simple directions;
3. more detailed one-activity directions;

B. develop oral vocabulary including:

1. English terminology for expressing concepts learned through the first language;
2. new vocabulary in context;
3. new vocabulary in normal speech patterns; and
4. content versus function words;

C. repeat oral messages, conveying the main idea accurately.

III. READING - The student shall be provided opportunities to

A. distinguish between letter sounds and shapes;

B. track visually from left to right and top to bottom of a written page;

C. identify basic sight words;

D. sequence events in a selection;

E. identify main idea;

F. recall details;

G. understand graphic materials such as maps, globes, charts, and road signs;

H follow written directions;

I respond to nonverbal stimuli such as traffic signals and stop lights;

IV. WRITING - The student shall be provided opportunities to

A. use the Roman alphabet;

B. use standard spelling, punctuation, and capitalization;

C. begin to learn to proofread (spelling, punctuation, capitalization);

D. write words, phrases, and sentences from dictation;

E. generate and write thoughts of his/her own;

F. use the composing process to plan and generate writing;

G. write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Year 2 Objectives - ESL/ Reading/Writing

I. GENERAL NOTE: - The student will continue to refine all skills acquired in year one of the Language Center program. Additionally, the student will acquire competencies in the following areas.

II. SPEAKING - The student shall be provided opportunities to

A. successfully give oral directions including:

1. more detailed one-activity directions;
2. series of more detailed directions;

B. speak formally or informally in the appropriate situation;

C. enunciate clearly English sounds in a variety of positions and combinations and in context;

D. speak English fluently including:

1. self confidence;
2. proper tempo, stress, and intonation; and
3. variety in sentence length and syntactical structure;

E. express thoughts accurately using:

1. precise vocabulary;
2. economy of expression;
3. idiomatic and slang expressions;
4. complex sentence patterns; and
5. sequencing of messages;

III. READING - The student shall be provided opportunities to

A. demonstrate basic word-attack skills such as structural analysis and contextual clues;

B. predict future actions and outcomes;

C. draw conclusions;

D. summarize orally in the first language and in English;

E. recognize and use parts of a book; and

F. use reference materials such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, directories, catalogs, periodicals, newspapers.

IV. WRITING - The student shall be provided opportunities to

A. use the composing process to plan and generate writing;

B. write for a variety of purposes and audiences; and

C. proofread for clarity of language, appropriate vocabulary , and usage.

ESL METHODOLOGIES

The methodologies defined below are discussed more fully in Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition by Stephen D. Krashen(3).

Total Physical Response: The instructor gives oral commands which involve an overt physical response. The students respond by obeying the command.

Conversation: Conversation is defined here as interaction between a native speaker and second language learners where the native speaker adapts his/her vocabulary and speaking style to the learner's abilities.

Drills, Oral and Written: These are drills where specific linguistic patterns are practiced by simple repetition, substitution, and/or transformation.

Choral Reading: This is a variation on oral drills. A "chorus" of students reads sentences, dialogues or selections aloud.

Visual Clues: Teachers provide students with visible clues (hand signals, props, etc.) to the appropriate response(s).

Modeling: Teachers provide examples of appropriate responses (either oral or written). Students model their responses after the examples.